हालांकि रूसी परिसंघ, उक्रेन, बेलारूस, कजाकस्तान, उजबेकिस्तान, ताजिकिस्तान, किर्गिजस्तान और तुर्कमेनिस्तान में हमारे आवासी मिशन कार्य कर रहे हैं लेकिन जहां तक अन्य राज्यों का संबंध है उनमें सह-प्रत्यायन किया गया है ।

Visit of Indian Nationals to pilgrim centres abroad

3602. SHRI VISHNUKANT SHASTRI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) which are the pilgrimage centres in foreign countries where Indian nationals go annually;

(b) what are the criteria for electing pilgrims for these pilgrimages;

(c) the expenditure involvel, per-head,, pilgrimage-wise and the amount charged from the individuals for these pilgrimages, separately;

(d) what is the mode of transport, pilgrimage-wise; and

(e) what subsidy is given by Government to a pilgrim, pilgrimage-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA):

SAUDI ARABIA

(a) Our nationals visit Saudi Arabia annually to undertake the Haj pilgrimage.

(b) A quota of Haj pilgrims is decided every year in consultation with the Ministry of Finance. Applications are invited well in advance of the event by the Central Haj Committee, a statutory body constituted in terms of the Haj Act of 1959. Final selection of the pilgrims is carried out through draw of lots conducted by the State Haj committees. Applicants having already performed in the past five years are not included in the process of draw of lots. Those over 65 years of age are given preference over the other applicants and are separately selected.

(c) Successful applicants are permitted by the Ministry of Finance to purchase against Indian rupees foreign exchange worth of either SR 5,500 or 4,600. This amount in foreign exchange is released to enable the pilgrims to defray expenditulre on boarding, lodging and payment of compulsory dues including internal transport in Saudi Arabia. Besides, a pilgrim is required to purchase his ticket for Air travel.

(d) Till last year i.e. 1994. Haj pilgrims had been proceeding to Saudi Arabia both by Air and by sea. Beginning from Haj 1996 (which falls on May 9). Government have decided to discontinue sailings for Haj. The pilgrims will therefore be travelling to and from Saudi Arabia for Haj by Air only.

(e) The Central Haj Committee organises Haj Charters with the help of the Department of Civil Aviation and Air India. International Air carriers are invired to bid and negotiations are conducted to determine the charter air fare for Haj. The fare to be charged from each pilgrim is decided by the Cabinet. The difference between the charter fare and the fare payable by the pilgrim is borne on the budget of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tousism. for Haj 1994, this difference worked out to Rs. 5,000 per pilgrim. As regards Haj 1995, Cabinet decision on the fare to be charged from the pilgrim is expected shortly. The quantum of the difference borne by the Government will be known only after the decision is taken.

TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION OF CHINA

(a) Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra

(b) The pilgrim apply to the Ministrw of External Affairs in response to thhe advertisement placed in leading dailies. Pilgrims are then selected on a random basis and those found medically fit proceed for the pilgrimage.

(c) The Chinese Government charges US S 500 for the pilgrimage (1994).

Payment of Rs. 6000/- (1994) is made in Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam which is responsible for the logistics on the Indian side. In addition to this, there is the optional expenditure for hiring ponies/porters etc.

(d) The pilgrims travel a certain distance by bus and then the major portion of the pilgrimage is on foot/pony.

(e) The Government does not provide any subsidy to the pilgrims going on Kailish Manasarovar Yatra.

PAKISTAN

(a) Indian nationals are visiting the following pilgrimage centres in Pakistan every year under the Indo-Pak Protocol on Religious Shrines, 1974.

(i) Gurdwara Shri Nankana Sahib, Rawalpindi

(ii) Gurdwara Shri Panja Saheb, Hasanabdal

(iii) Samadhi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Lahore

(iv) Gurdwara Shri Dehra Sahib, Lahore

(v) Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Lahore

(vi) Gurdwara Dewan Khana, Lahore

(vii) Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj, Singhanian, Lahore

(viii) Gurdwara Bhai Tara Singh, Lahore

(ix) Gurdwaha of Sixth Guru, Mozang, Lahore

(x) Birth place of Shri Guru Ram Das, Lahore

(xi) Gurdwara Chveen Badshahi Mozang, Lahore

(xii) Sadhu Bela, Khanpur and Mirpur Mathelo, Sukkur

(xiii) Shadani Darbar, Hayas Pitafi

(xiv) Shrine at Sree Katasraj

(b) Selection of pilgrims for shrines at S. No. 1 to 11 is done State-wise and coordinated by the respective State Governments. Selection for Shines at S. No. 12 and 13 is done by the nodal organisation Shadani Darbar, Raipur. Various religious organisations nominate their members to the Shrine at S. No. 14.

(c) (d) & (e) Government of India does not subsidies Sikh/Hindu Jathas to Pakistan. However, the following services/assistance to the visiting Jathas are facilitated by the Indian Government:

(i) The Reserve Bank of India releases the foreign exchange as a special case in view of the fact that permission for these jathas are given by the Pakistan at short notice.

(ii) The Railway Ministry arranges special train for pilgrime;

(iii) The High Commission of India, Islamabad deputes officials in order to render any kind of assistance to the visiting pilgrims.

Indo-Thai Agreement to curb Criminal Activities

3603. SHRI GUNDAPPA KORWAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Thailand have agreed to expand cooperation in order to deal with terrorism, traific in narcotics, arms smuggling, vitlent crimes and flight of criminals, and to draw up a framework agreement to establish order on the high seas;

(b) if so, the detalis thereof?

(c) whether India had earlier made similar types of agreements with other countries; and